303.3AP – Purchasing

Purpose

The purpose of this administrative procedure is to ensure that School District 68 ("SD68") procurement of materials, goods, equipment, and services is at an optimum value for the life cycle costs of purchases.

Background

The Finance Department is authorized to commit SD68 to the purchase of goods and services in addition to binding agreements such as purchase orders, equipment leases and contracts.

Objectives

- Processes established for efficient and appropriate utilization of SD68 funds
- Transparency and accountability in the use of SD68 funds for the acquisition of goods, services, and capital assets
- Procurement that meets SD68's quality and safety requirements, at competitive prices and in a consistent manner
- Compliance with required legislation, regulations, policies, and procedures
- Risks identified, assessed, and managed throughout the procurement process
- Encourage the assessment of environmental factors associated with the procurement of goods and seek sustainable options when possible

Scope

This administrative procedure document applies to all employees of SD68, as well as contractors and consultants while engaged by SD68, who are involved in the acquisition of goods, services, and capital assets.

It is applicable to all procurement regardless of the ultimate source of funding, unless specifically indicated otherwise by the funding source.

Definitions

"Contract"	is a legally binding agreement for one party to provide goods or services to the other party, in exchange for payment or other form of consideration, subject to terms and conditions.
"Electronic Bidding System"	is a provincial or national electronic tendering service (e.g., BC Bid) designed to facilitate the procurement process within the public and private sector business communities.
"Procurement"	is the process of acquiring goods, works and services, covering both acquisitions (by any means, including by purchase, rental, lease, trade, or conditional sale, of goods, services, or construction) from

	external third parties. Procurement is to include sourcing, contracting, and purchasing activities, including approval segregation and limits, competitive and non-competitive procurement, purchasing, contract awarding, and conflict of interest.
"Purchase Order" ("PO")	is a legally binding agreement sent to vendors to place an official order of goods and/or services. A purchase order with an authorized signature is authority to purchase on behalf of SD68.
"Request for Proposal" ("RFP") or "Request for Expression of Interest and Qualifications" ("REIQ")	is a document used to solicit bids from potential vendors interested in supplying a good, service or capital asset. The RFP or REIQ outlines the bidding process, mandatory vendor requirements, timelines for bid submission and contractual terms and conditions.
"Request for Quotation" ("RFQ")	is a written invitation for vendors to submit a quote to supply a particular good, service or capital asset.
"Quote"	is a written or verbal statement of price, terms of sale and description of goods and/or services offered by a vendor.
"Sole Source"	is the procurement of goods, services, or capital assets from a supplier in the absence of applying a competitive procurement process (e.g., RFP, RFQ, etc.).
"Invitation to Tender" ("ITT")	is a process used to solicit Tenders from vendors for the provision of goods, services, or capital assets where the specifications, terms, conditions, and other details are set out in the invitation and the bids are evaluated primarily on price, without further negotiations. If the purchase proceeds, SD68 is obligated to place the order with the supplier who has offered the best value or the best price. The supplier is obligated to honor the price and quality of the product if the goods, services, or capital assets are placed on order within the limitations of the quotation offer.
"Tenders"	are offers made by vendors in response to an ITT received before a closing date and time specified in the ITT document.
"Vendor"	includes supplier or potential supplier of goods and/or services and may be a contractor or consultant.

303.3AP – Purchasing

Guiding Principals

1. Spending Authority

Students and staff members are not to commit SD68 for payment of goods and services and may not sign rental agreements (except car rentals), leases, licenses, or agreements with any vendor except when specifically approved to do so as outlined in the following table:

Threshold	Delegated Purchasing Authority
$100 or less	All staff
$5,000 or less	Vice-principals (All), Capital Project Coordinators, Facilities Planners, General Foreman, Executive Assistants (District Admin Center), Board Chair (for Superintendent only)
$10,000 or less	Principals (All), Finance Assistants – Purchasing, Department Managers (excluding Facilities & Finance)
$25,000 or less	Finance Managers, Assistant Managers - Facilities, Directors (Excluding Facilities, Finance, & Information Technology)
$50,000 or less	Facilities Managers (or acting), Assistant Director Facilities, Director Information Technology, Assistant Superintendents
$75,000 or less	Executive Director Facilities (or acting), Director Finance
$75,000 or above	Secretary Treasurer, Associate Secretary Treasurer, Superintendent
Unforeseen Expenditures above $100,000	Secretary Treasurer and Superintendent (to include both signatures and to be reported to the Board).

2. Methods of Procurement

Except where otherwise noted in the attached procedure or where governed by other policies, all purchases and financial commitments for materials, goods, equipment, and services are to be made through the Finance Department, staff reimbursement and/or Purchasing Cards ("P-Cards").

All computer hardware and software purchases must be approved by the Information Technology department, and all photocopier purchases must be approved by the Purchasing department.

2.1 Process of Reimbursements

To be reimbursed for authorized expenses, employees must fill out a Cheque Requisition Form, attach original copies of receipts showing proof of payment (and confirmation of shipment for online orders), and submit it to the Finance Department.

2.2 Procurement Thresholds

The following table summarizes procurement method thresholds:

Threshold	Procurement Method	Purchase Order Required?	Guidance
Goods and Services:			
$2,000 or less	Sole Source	No	Goods and services not exceeding $2,000 may be purchased at the discretion of the Finance Department through sole sourcing (section 2.3) or through an appropriate method of procurement (section 2).
$10,000 or less	From pre-approved vendors, minimum of two verbal/online quotations	Yes	Sources of supply for requirements expected to exceed $2,000 but not $10,000 shall be determined by verbal/online quotation, from two or more sources (section 2.4).
Over $10,000 but not exceeding $75,000	Minimum three written quotations	Yes	Sources of supply for requirements expected to exceed $10,000 but not $75,000 shall be determined by written quotation, from three or more sources who are known to be able to provide the quality of goods or services required (section 2.4).
Over $75,000	Request for Tender or Request for Proposals (depending on known specs)	Yes	Sources of supply for requirements expected to exceed $75,000 shall be determined by public opportunity through BC Bid.
Construction:			
Up to and including $200,000	Minimum three written quotations	Yes	Construction contracts up to $200,000 shall be determined by written quotation, from three or more vendors known to be able to provide the quality of goods or services required.
Over $200,000	Request for Tender or Request for Proposals (depending on known specs)	Yes	Construction contracts expected to exceed $200,000 shall be determined by Request for Tender or Request for Proposals. A public invitation to tender shall be posted on BC Bid using an appropriate solicitation process.

SD68 complies with the spirit and intent of all applicable trade agreements, including the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA)* and the *New West Partnership Trade Agreement (NWPTA).*

Under NWPTA, construction is defined as:

A Construction, reconstruction, demolition, repair or renovation of a building, structure or other civil engineering or architectural work and includes site preparation, excavation, drilling, seismic investigation, the supply of products and materials, the supply of equipment and machinery if they are included in and incidental to the construction, and the installation and repair of fixtures of a building, structure or other civil engineering or architectural work, but does not include professional consulting services related to the construction contract unless they are included in the procurement.

2.3 Sole Sourcing

Goods or services that are only available from a sole source may be exempt from the tendering process and/or the quotation process. The finance department will work with the end user to assess if a sole source situation may exist. This assessment will then be put forward for approval by the Secretary-Treasurer, and/or Superintendent.

The Secretary-Treasurer, Superintendent or delegate may authorize the immediate purchase of any item or service without recourse to the provisions of this procedure where:

a) staff, student or public safety is in question;

b) purchase will prevent damage to SD68 facilities;

c) essential services will be restored;

d) essential physical plant services will be restored

e) funding may be lost or not obtained as a result of the delays realized when going out for tender

f) staff can strictly prove that only one contractor is qualified, or is available, to provide the goods, services or construction;

g) the goods or services require compatibility with existing goods or services, or may void any warranties or guarantees;

h) the goods and services are associated with local land based Indigenous cultural practices

i) pricing has been established by joint purchase group tenders or other public entities with the option to extend to school districts, and Government agreements available for school district use;

It is not necessary to tender or go through the quotation process for the purchase of used items, legal, investment and banking services.

Where a sole source purchase is made, the purchase order ("PO") will indicate that the purchase is sole source and supporting documentation, if available, will be attached.

2.4 Request for Quotes

Request for quotes can take the following forms:

a) Verbal quotations:

Received from two or more supplier representatives, usually by telephone. Online price checking can count as an alternative for a verbal quotation. Such quotations are to be recorded by the Finance Department and retained with the PO.

b) Written quotations:

Received from three or more sources in response to a written request. Responses may be submitted by fax, BC Bid, email, or mail.

2.5 Public Opportunities

Public opportunities may include but are not limited to, Request for Proposal (RFP), Request for Expression of Interest and Qualifications (REIQ), Request for Quotation (RFQ), and Invitation to Tender (ITT). Assessment of which document and process to use is dependent on the Finance department.

Once it has been decided that a public opportunity is required to purchase the goods or services, the finance department or delegate will meet with the school or department representatives to establish the product specifications and evaluation criteria if necessary.

If required, an evaluation committee will be established to evaluate the responses to the opportunity. The Committee may be made up of representatives from the school or department along with finance department staff or delegate.

The finance department or delegate will build the document for review and approval by the school Principal or Department Head. Once approved, the Buyer will post the document on BC Bid.

2.6 Responses to Public Opportunities

Submissions may be done by email, hard copy, through BC Bid or other tendering platforms, and will be received by either the finance department or delegate. Required delivery methods will be stated in the opportunity documents. The date and time of receipt will be determined by the email server for email submissions or will be time stamped by the finance department or delegate for hard copy submissions. Under no circumstances shall submissions received be opened prior to the specified closing time.

2.7 Public Opportunity Opening

Openings shall be done by the finance department or delegate witnessed by two or more SD68 employees, one of which must be a finance department employee. All persons present at the opening, (including non-SD68 employees) shall be recorded on the opening form.

Opportunities shall be:

a) opened at the same time, after the time indicated as the closing time in the document. If the public has come to witness the opening, it shall occur not later than 15 minutes after the official closing time indicated in the document;

b) initialled and dated by two or more SD68 employees who witnessed the opening, one of which must be a finance department employee; and

c) recorded on the "Opening Form" which shall be signed as indicated in b above

2.8 Late Submissions

Submissions received after the closing date and time specified in the document are considered “late” and will not be accepted.

2.9 Submission Withdrawals

A bidder may withdraw an opportunity by written notice only, provided such notice is received by the finance department prior to the closing time and date set in the document.

2.10 Submission Amendments

A firm may amend its submission provided the amendment is received by the finance department in writing or by email prior to the time and due date.

2.11 Award and Contract

The award of a contract to other than the lowest bidder must be based on facts that are defensible in the event of enquiry from any source at any level.

Selection of the successful offer is based on, in no order, but not limited to, the following criteria:

a) compliance with opportunity documents;
b) overall cost impact to SD68;
c) firm prices vs. approximate prices or escalation;
d) cancellation provisions, where applicable;
e) SD68's assessment of the ability of the bidder (and their staff) to supply the goods or services within the timeframe required by the SD68;
f) warranty and service facilities best value based on quality, service and price;
g) compliance with regulatory requirements;
h) experience and reputation of the bidder/supplier;
i) positive environmental and/or social attributes; and
j) other criteria as deemed applicable, by the Finance Department, to the purchase being made

When opportunities are received which appear to be identical in price, compliance with specifications, discounts, location of supplier etc., and further careful review will be made to identify some reasonable criteria on which to base final selection. The importance of selecting an opportunity for reasons that can be defended is reiterated. The Secretary-Treasurer or delegate shall determine the successful bidder in the event of identical offers.

If only one submission is received, the decision to accept the offer shall be made, in conjunction with the end user, by the Secretary Treasurer or delegate.

If no submissions are received, then the district may proceed with the procurement of the goods or service by receiving a minimum of three written quotations.

A Letter of Award will be issued to the successful proponent followed by either a purchase order, supply agreement, or construction contract if applicable.

It is recognized that tenders for select construction contracts may be authorized to be conducted by outside consultants. In these cases, the consultant will provide a recommendation for award. The use of such consultants will be reviewed and approved by the Secretary Treasurer or delegate.

The Executive Director Planning & Operations shall be responsible for the administration of construction contracts, and the services of engineers, architects and other professional and consulting services related to the construction contracts.

2.12 Access to Bids and Prices

A summary of public opportunities shall be prepared and kept on file for public information, if required.

Release of information shall be subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

2.13 Bid and/or Performance Bonds (or Deposits)

In some circumstances the district may require bonding. The decision to require bonding will be made by the Finance Department in conjunction with the end user.

3. Real Property

3.1 The Secretary-Treasurer shall be responsible for the purchase and disposal of land and real property.

3.2 The Secretary-Treasurer or delegate shall administer the tendering procedures for real property, construction of works and buildings and shall maintain the original legal copies of such contracts on behalf of the School District.

3.3 The Secretary-Treasurer or delegate shall administer the leasing of land, real property and public facilities and shall maintain the original legal copies of all such agreements on behalf of the School District.

4. Sustainable Purchasing

4.1 SD68 wishes to acquire goods and services in a way that gives preference to suppliers that generate outcomes that have a positive social and environmental impact including reduction of GHG emissions, and that values the District's commitment to reconciliation. As such, where supplies and equipment are available for purchase in a sustainable manner, without significant additional costs to SD68, it is encouraged that the sustainable option be successful in the procurement process. Examples of such options include:

a) Choosing office products with recognized green certifications,

b) Choose options with less packaging and/or request packaging be minimal and recyclable,

c) Buying from local suppliers,

d) Selecting supplies/vendors that have positive social considerations,

e) Leasing equipment for temporary needs instead of buying, or

f) Collaborations among purchasers and suppliers to address key sustainability issues such as the carbon footprint of products or local employment for disadvantaged groups

When posting a request for proposal, whenever possible, evaluation criteria that have a sustainable component should be included. Tender documents should also include an expectation that suppliers are compliant with all applicable labour, health and safety, and environmental laws.

5. Surplus Material

5.1 Where equipment, vehicles or materials are considered surplus to the needs to SD68 and are expected to have resale value, the Secretary Treasurer or delegate may direct these items be disposed of in any of the following ways:

- Following an assessment of condition, the items may be kept and stored for possible use or transfer within the district.
- Used as a trade in to reduce the purchase cost of new replacement items
- Offered for sale through a public auction, such as the Province of BC Asset Investment Recovery Service

5.2 Where equipment or materials are considered surplus to the SD68's needs and do not have a resale value, the Secretary-Treasurer or delegate may authorize items to be:

a) salvaged for parts;

b) scrapped;

c) traded in for credit against purchases;

d) sold for a nominal amount; or

e) donated

Equipment, vehicles, or materials will not be sold to SD68 employees unless they are the successful bidder in a public auction process.

6. Compliance Monitoring

6.1 Purchases in the name of SD68 and the use of district purchasing cards, documents and resources is restricted to the acquisition of goods and services required for SD68 business purposes and must follow the procedures laid out in this document.

6.2 The finance department is responsible for monitoring compliance with these purchasing procedures, and for following-up on potential exceptions and abnormalities.

6.3 The use of SD68 resources for the procurement of items or services for personal use is expressly prohibited. Where it is determined that SD68 resources were used for the procurement of items or services for personal use, the employee in question will be required to reimburse the employer for the full amount of the purchase, and the matter will be referred to Human Resources for further review.

6.4 Other deviations from these procedures will be reviewed with the employee in question and their supervisor and may be referred to Human Resources where there is repeated non-compliance, or where a pattern of non-compliance has been identified.

Previous AP Number: *AP513*
Created: *1957*
Amended: *1986.11.26;2020.06.10; 2023.05.10; 2023.09.20; 2024.11.01; 2026.06.22*